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THE MEMORIES OF AN OLD SCOTTISH BURGH.

THE success of a Scottish school of fiction which places special emphasis upon 'locality' has naturally led to a revival of interest in the works of John Galt, who was unquestionably the forerunner, if not the master, of that school. And it is impossible to dissociate Galt from his native Irvine, the 'Gudetown' of his own Provost Pawkie, whose Kirkgate—for did there not live in it Miss Mally Glencairn of *The Ayrshire Legatees*?—has been 'likened unto the kingdom of heaven, where there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage.' Irvine may not commend itself quite so readily to the casual visitor as it did more than three centuries ago and a half ago to Sir William Brereton, who found it 'daintily situated upon a navigable arm of the sea, and in a dainty, pleasant, level champaign country.' In truth, several chemical works, although they have much to do with the present prosperity of Irvine, have destroyed the sweet savour of this 'champaign country,' and are objected to even by the enthusiastic golfer, who of late years has been greatly in evidence in the neighbourhood of Irvine. The town itself is, however, but little changed since the days of Provost Pawkie and those 'improvements' which he took such pains to chronicle. Although Irvine is now a substantial town of ten thousand inhabitants, there has been less growth in it than in the neighbouring burgh of Ayr, which, owing to its superior attractions and facilities as a seaside resort, will probably at next census be proved to have three times that population.

The memories of Irvine go as far back as the beginning of the thirteenth century, as it received a charter from Alexander II. It played its part also in the War of Independence, although that part was one of humiliation even more than of victory. For, according to the Marquis of Bute, who, after investigation, accepts the old narrative of Hemingford, the

'capitulation of Irvine' was signed in the old burgh—perhaps in what was then the equivalent of the Town Hall—on Sunday, July 7, 1297. Earl Percy had arrived from Ayr with an English army, and encamped in the neighbourhood of the town. Meanwhile, there had been a quarrel in the camp of the Scots between Wallace and the Bruce of the period. As a consequence, Bruce and the other leaders of the aristocratic party joined Percy, and swore fealty to Edward, while Wallace and his sympathisers marched off to the Border region.

Irvine must have backed up King Robert well in his struggle both against the English and the pretensions of the Balliols, for there is still in existence a charter granted to it six years before the battle of Bannockburn. Irvine, like the west of Scotland generally, was a stronghold of the 'Wild West Whigs' as well as of the patriots of the War of Independence. Here lived the Reverend, and in every respect very godly, Robert Blair. Here, in 1640, twelve women were burned for witchcraft. Irvine has also been from a very early period associated with the Montgomerie family, which perhaps reached the height of its reputation in 1839, when thousands of strangers, including that Pretender who subsequently became Napoleon III., came from all parts of the country, and from beyond it, to see, to take part in—and to be damped by—the fêtes of the Eglinton Tournament. There still stand the remains, including a Norman gateway, of Seagate Castle, which is supposed to have been the dower house of the Montgomeries, and to have been built about the middle of the fourteenth century.

The notable memories of Irvine are not much more, however, than a century old, and are associated chiefly with men—and one woman—whose names have not yet been forgotten, and are not likely soon to be, such as Lord Justice-General Boyle; Eckford, the designer of the American navy; John Galt; James Montgomery;

Robert Burns; and the most extraordinary of all Scottish female fanatics (or impostors), Elspat Simpson, better known as 'Luckie Buchan.' The most in evidence of all the distinguished natives of Irvine is Lord-Justice-General Boyle, who was the senior of Galt by seven years, and the junior of Montgomery by one year, and who survived to 1853. One of the most noticeable features of the town is a statue, by the late Sir John Steell, which was erected to the judge in 1867. Eckford, the designer of the American navy, is mentioned by 'Delta' in his Memoir of Galt as having attended the same school as the biographer of Provost Pawkie. That was doubtless the old grammar-school, which is now in process of demolition. Since Moir wrote, a marble bust of the naval architect has been placed in the Council Chamber. There is also to be seen an excellent portrait of Bailie Fullarton, the original of Provost Pawkie—he was only acting Provost, as Lord Eglinton held the honorary office—who astonished the painter of his (literary) portrait by presenting him with the freedom of the burgh in a very sensible speech. Inquiries made in Irvine do not elicit much about the Eckford family. So far as can be ascertained at this time of day, they lived in the High Street of the burgh, somewhere between the Town House and the shop which was occupied in Burns's time by Templeton, a bookseller, and is now a hair-dresser's establishment. It is possible that Eckford's father, like Galt's, 'followed the sea.'

It is hardly necessary to say that of all the memories which are dear to the people of Irvine, those which centre round the name of Burns are the most important and tenacious. As all the world knows, the poet left Lochlea about midsummer in 1781 to learn the trade of flax-dressing with—so it is believed—one Peacock, who was a relative on the mother's side. The Irvine traditions relating to Burns do not quite fit in with this period of life as it is represented by his biographers, or even in the fullest of his chapters of autobiography—his celebrated letter to Moore. He makes a grave accusation of swindling against his employer—or partner—Peacock, and then he relates the termination of his connection with Irvine thus: 'As we gave a welcome carousal to the New Year, the shop took fire and, burnt to ashes, and I was left, like a true poet, not worth sixpence.' This would seem to indicate that Burns only occupied one flax-dressing or 'heckling' shop in Irvine. The tradition in Irvine, however, is that there were two shops—or, to be more accurate, two rooms—in which Burns did 'heckling,' and that it was the second, in the High Street, that was burnt. Beyond all question, the building which is pointed out as Peacock's shop—a thatched back building of the but-and-ben order, situated in a narrow crooked lane, known as 'The Glasgow Vennel,' that runs east from the High Street, and in Burns's day was the only thoroughfare into the Glasgow Road, is quite intact. In 1850, Mr Hugh Alexander of Broadmead took down in writing the statement made by a John Boyd, then residing in

Eglinton Street, Irvine, who affirmed that he had been an eye-witness of the fire, which he said took place in the High Street. Further, in 1859, Colonel Adam Fairlie, of Montreal, a native of Irvine, and then between eighty and ninety years of age, who was present at the Burns Centenary dinner in his native town, stated in the course of a speech that he saw the fire in the poet's 'heckling' shop, which was 'a few doors from the *King's Arms Hotel* in High Street.' The site of what is supposed to be this shop is pointed out, and the assumption is that, when Burns quarrelled with Peacock, he set up for himself in the High Street. It is difficult, if not impossible, however, to reconcile this view of Burns's flax-dressing experiment in Irvine with the account of the abrupt termination of it given by himself in his letter to Moore.

One is on safer ground when dealing with the question of the room that the poet personally occupied in Irvine. There is a tradition that, for a time at any rate, he lived in one of the rooms used by Peacock as a shop, and an inspection of that building suggests the possibility of the north end having been used as a dwelling-house. But it is very generally believed that the poet rented—for a shilling a week—a room in another house on the same side of the Glasgow Vennel, but nearer to the High Street. The initials 'R. B.' are carved in the stone mantel-piece of a kitchen in this tenement, and it is surmised that this carving was done by Burns himself. There is no tradition in Irvine of Burns having had a landlady. He no doubt lived alone, and cooked his own oatmeal porridge. This view is borne out by the postscript to the letter addressed to his father, dated December 27, 1781: 'My meal is nearly out, but I am going to borrow till I get more.'

The Irvine Burns Club preserves with jealous care the manuscripts of *The Cotter's Saturday Night*, *Scotch Drink*, *The Address to the Devil*, *The Two Dogs*, *The Earnest Cry and Prayer*, and *The Holy Fair*. These are not copies written by the poet, but the originals which were sent to the Kilmarnock Press, and bear the printer's marks. They were presented to the Club by the Rev. Alexander Campbell, the Burgher minister of Irvine, in 1843. Mr Campbell had married the widow of Mr Robinson, a writer in Irvine, who had in his youth been a clerk in the office of Gavin Hamilton, in Mauchline. It may be pretty safely assumed that Burns presented the manuscripts to Gavin Hamilton, and that at his death they fell into the hands of Mr Robinson.

There are few memories of Burns in Irvine. He was known to few people above the rank of Richard Brown, the sailor, who, he says, taught him 'freer' views of life than he had been accustomed to in Lochlea. There is reason to believe, however, that he was not unknown to the then Provost of Irvine, Mr Hamilton. It is generally understood, too, that on his way from his lodging in the Glasgow Vennel to his flax-dressing shop in the High Street, near the *King's Arms Hotel*, he was in the habit of calling at the book-shop—now a hair-dresser's establishment—kept by a Mr

Templeton. In these days, ballads were printed on slips of paper about the length of a newspaper column, and Mr Templeton used to tell how the poet was in the habit of asking him 'if there was anything new in that line.' He often seated himself on the counter, and reaching over, seized the bunch of ballads and read (sometimes aloud) such as struck his fancy.

The names of Richard Brown and David Sillar (who published a volume of poems in 1789, and rose to be a magistrate in Irvine) are those which are most closely associated at once with Burns and with Irvine. Brown seems to have been his most intimate friend while he actually resided in Irvine. He was 'a very noble character, but a helpless son of misfortune.' But 'he spoke of illicit love with the levity of a sailor,' and 'here his friendship did me a mischief.' Yet in the end of 1787 Burns wrote to Brown gratefully recalling a Sunday they had spent in Eglinton woods, and the suggestion of the elder man that certain verses he had heard repeated should be sent to a magazine. 'It was from this remark I derived that idea of my own pieces which encouraged me to endeavour at the character of a poet.' There are no memories of Brown in Irvine. There seems to be little doubt, however, that he is the Richard Brown who appears in the parish register as the son of William Brown and Jane Whinie, and as having been born on the 2d of June 1753. He was thus six years the senior of the poet, who, then only in his twenty-third year, might well respect his friend's 'knowledge of the world.'

Burns had returned to Lochlea from Irvine before the occurrence of the most exciting if not the most extraordinary events that perhaps ever gave variety to the necessarily humdrum life of the old burgh. It was in 1783 that that extraordinary fanatic or swindler—or compound of both—Elspat Simpson or Buchan appeared in the town as the friend and guest of the Rev. Hugh White, minister of the Relief congregation, and that the series of events began which culminated in the deposition of Mr White, the mobbing of 'Luckie' Buchan, and finally the expulsion of herself and her followers, when they, to the number of forty-five, marched by way of Kilmaurs to New Cample, near Closeburn, in Dumfriesshire. But in a letter written to his cousin, James Burness, in August 1784, the poet has given both a most graphic account of the disturbances attending upon the founding, and the expulsion of the Buchanite sect, and an accurate description of their extraordinary creed, and still more extraordinary practices.

Train goes so far as to contend—and in this contention he has recently been supported by the Rev. J. K. Hewison of Rothesay—that the 'darling Jean' of the first *Epistle to Davie* was not Jean Armour, but Jean Gardner, one of the Buchanites and the daughter of a butcher.

Irvine still cherishes the memory of John Galt and James Montgomery: their healths are uniformly drunk at the annual dinners of the Burns Club on the 25th of January. But tradition has not much more to say of Galt—who left Irvine when he was little more than

a child—than he himself has given in his Autobiography or embodied in *The Ayrshire Legatees* and *The Provost*. In the Autobiography he tells how—a child of four or so—he enlisted among the followers of 'Luckie' Buchan, and would have left Irvine with her for 'the New Jerusalem,' had not his mother dragged him back! The house on the west side of the High Street in which Galt was born was demolished in the year 1858. The site is now occupied by the Irvine branch of the Union Bank of Scotland. The agent, ex-Provost Paterson, has a photograph of it, which shows it to have been a very commonplace three-storey tenement. The ground-flat in Galt's time had a row of four windows looking to the street, and a close or entry to the extreme left, giving access to a court in the rear. The middle and upper flats had rows of five windows each. The tenant of the ground-flat entered from a door in the close, and the houses up-stairs were reached by a stair at the back. Galt's father, a sea-captain, is supposed to have occupied the middle flat. Above the mantel-piece in the public office of the bank, on a black marble slab, is the inscription: 'On this Site stood the House in which JOHN GALT, Poet and Novelist, was born, 2d May 1779. Rebuilt 1858.'

The old municipal buildings in which Galt received the freedom of the burgh of Irvine from—and to his surprise—his own Provost Pawkie, stood out in the centre of the street not far from where the Town Hall of to-day stands. They were demolished about a quarter of a century ago. Galt, when a boy, may have seen imprisoned debtors letting down their bonnets from the window of the jail by means of long strings, and fishing up the 'heart-easing gill' placed in these receptacles by friends or confederates outside. The appearance of the building at all events must have been quite familiar to young Galt. Since his day, the side of the High Street in which the Town Hall now stands has not been greatly altered. Some stories still linger in Irvine to the credit of Bailie Fullarton, who, as has been seen, was Galt's model for Provost Pawkie. When he had occasion in his magisterial office to lecture the offenders brought before him, he was in the habit of telling them, in reply to promises of amendment, that 'their promises wad fill the chawmer [chamber], but their performances wad a' gang into his snuff-box.' Bailie Fullarton, who appears to have come originally from Rothesay, and spoke with a strong Highland accent, carried on business for a long time as a candle-maker in Irvine. He was in the magistracy off and on for a period of forty years, and died in 1835, at the advanced age of ninety-five. His biographer survived him only four years.

James Montgomery, who was John Galt's senior by eight years, and survived him fifteen, dying in 1854 at the age of eighty-three, was not in the strict sense of the word a native of the burgh of Irvine. He was born in the Half-way of Irvine, the part of the town situated in the parish of Dundonald, on the left bank of the river, and known originally as the village of Fullarton. A shoemaker now

plies his trade in the apartment in which Montgomery was born, and which is at once a kitchen and a workshop. A stone in the front building bears the inscription: 'The birthplace of JAMES MONTGOMERY, "the Christian Poet," born 4th November 1771, died 13th April 1854.'

Irvine has been remarkable for its associations with poets and hymn writers, including not only James Montgomery, but also the Rev. David Dickson (1583-1663), covenanting minister of Irvine and author of *O Mother, dear Jerusalem*; Mrs Cousin, author of *The Sands of Time are Sinking*; and the Rev. W. B. Robertson (1820-1886), the poet-preacher and orator of the Trinity United Presbyterian Church in Irvine.

AN ELECTRIC SPARK.*

CHAPTER XV.—A DISCOVERY.

THE doctor was at home; had just dined, the servant said. He was having his coffee, and would be glad to see Mr Wynyan, he was sure.

Wynyan was shown in to find the doctor in an easy-chair with his cigar unlit, his coffee untasted. He held out his hand.

'Come and sit down,' he said sadly. 'Glad you've come; I wanted some one to talk to.—Wynyan, these are the times when an old bachelor feels his loneliness, and the want of a true woman who can comfort him.'

Wynyan shook hands warmly, sat down in silence, and refused the cigars offered to him.

'You're like me, Wynyan,' sighed the doctor. 'I can't smoke to-night. I've been having it all over.'

Wynyan looked at him.

'This is one of the times when a thoughtful man takes himself to task. I have lost a patient: could I have done any more and saved him?'

'I think not. I would trust my life in your hands, doctor.'

'Thank you, my lad—thank you; but the feeling will come. It always does at such a time. Have I been guilty of any neglect? Was I ignorant? Ought I to have called in the aid of a specialist? It's terrible work, my dear boy, when one is attacked like this.'

Wynyan looked at him in silence.

'You think me selfish, eh?'

'No, sir; I believe that Mr Dalton was one of your oldest friends, and that you did the best that could be done.'

'Thank you, Wynyan; that does me good. I did: I made a special study of his case. But with a heart like his, nothing was of any use. He and those about him could do more than the doctor. Ah well: he has gone. The world is the worse for its loss, and I can only think of that poor suffering girl.'

'Have—have you seen her to-day, sir?'

'Eh? Oh yes! twice, bless her! Dreadfully cut up, Wynyan, and Miss Bryne too. Nothing but time for them. You have been and seen them, of course?'

'No, sir. I felt that my visit would have been ill-timed.'

'Nonsense, my lad. You shouldn't study etiquette in a trouble like this. It would have been in true sympathy. Ah well, I shall be glad now when it is all over. You will be at the funeral?'

'I shall certainly be there, sir, but not by invitation.'

'What? Nonsense! Of course you will be invited. You will take the head of affairs now.'

Wynyan shook his head; and then told all that had passed.

'The scoundrel!' cried the doctor. 'But you are never going to put up with that, boy. You shouldn't have taken the money.'

'I did not,' said Wynyan quietly.

'Oh come: that's something.—But what a scamp! He killed the old man over a quarrel; there's no doubt about that. I saw old Hamber, and he told me that they had been having words. But he mustn't have matters all his own way. I hear that there is no will, no trustees, no nothing. How can men be so reckless over their affairs? If Dalton had put down in black and white what he meant to be done after his death, how simple and sure everything would have been!'

'Yes, doctor,' said Wynyan drily. 'You have made your will, I suppose?'

'Eh? I? Well, no: not yet. But this is a lesson to me. I'll get it done at once.—And so Brant has regularly turned you out of the business?'

'Exactly, as if I had been some boy clerk with ten shillings a week,' replied Wynyan.

'A scoundrel!—There, I tell you what you shall do, my boy. You shall start an opposition business on your own account, and get all the work away. I'll lend you a few thousands. Hang it! I'll find the money, and come in as sleeping partner. That would floor the rascal.—No; that wouldn't do, though; we should be ruining poor little Renée, eh?'

'Yes,' said Wynyan, smiling.—'That would not do, doctor.'

'No; but we'll checkmate him somehow.—Do light up, my dear boy. I feel as if I could manage my cigar now. Let's have a quiet talk over affairs. I can't advise you; but I should say that this is one of the difficulties which will settle themselves. We must wait. Perhaps Renée or her aunt may find some papers yet. We shall see.'

They sat on, talking over the incidents of the last day or two, till Wynyan rose.

'Going, my boy? Ah well, I won't ask you

to stay later. A good night's rest will do us both good.—By the way, I don't quite know where you live. Blaine's Inn, isn't it?'

'No, sir. Number 9 St Chrysos' Inn.'

'Give me your card. I might want to write to you.'

Wynyan's hand went to his breast-pocket, was thrust in and snatched away, and let fall, as a peculiar thrill ran through him.

'Hullo!' cried the doctor. 'Misfortunes never come singly. Hang it, man, don't say you've lost your pocket-book.'

'No—no,' said Wynyan hurriedly; 'but I have no card. I'll send you my address.—Good-night, sir.'

'But stop a minute. Anything the matter?'

'Yes—no. Don't ask me now, sir. I'm a good deal upset with all this trouble.—Good-night, sir.'

He wrung the doctor's hand, and hurried away, leaving Kilpatrick wondering.

'There's something wrong,' he said, as he heard the door close and his visitor's hurried step. 'He must have lost something. Might as well have said. Poor fellow! he looked ghastly.'

The doctor was quite right; and if he had seen Wynyan's face as he passed the next lamp, he would have concluded to follow him, feeling that medical advice was needed. It was ashy, and the big drops of perspiration stood upon his brow. He was trembling, too, with excitement as he hurried along, holding his hand pressed against his breast.

Signalling to the first cab he saw, he was driven to St Chrysos', where he leaped out, and was rushing in by the narrow gateway, when a shout recalled him to himself.

'Don't do that, sir,' yelled the cabman.

'I beg your pardon, my man,' cried Wynyan hurriedly, as he went back and paid him. 'I'm ill—not myself.'

'Shall I drive round, and find a doctor, sir?' said the man eagerly; but Wynyan did not hear him. He staggered rather than walked through the gateway and across the square to his own staircase, still with one hand pressed to his breast, as if suffering from a wound, till he had to lower it, get out his latchkey, and enter his rooms.

His hands trembled so that he could scarcely get out a match to light the gas; and this done, he looked wildly round, as if to see that he was alone before he thrust his hand into his breast and drew out, neatly folded in its creases, and forming a packet about the size of a fairly large pocket-book, the plans and drawings of his invention, just as he had taken them from the dying man's hands, and thrust them hurriedly into his breast-pocket till he could get the key of the safe and place them in their own drawer.

CHAPTER XVI.—IN TEMPTATION.

Wynyan stood folding and unfolding the drawings for some moments beneath the gas globe, looking dazed and strange from the bewildering crowd of thoughts which swept through his brain.

These drawings—come back in so strange a way to his hands from his partner in the in-

vention, he, dying, placing them as it were in the charge of him who had morally a full right to participate in all that the invention produced. And now, after the brutal dismissal he had suffered at the hands of Brant Dalton, completely thrown over, almost without acknowledgment of his services, he found himself standing there holding in his hand the proof that the man who had made himself his enemy was literally hoist with his own petard. The valuable invention, his idea originally, had come back to him at this strange turn of Fortune's wheel. Dalton, the only other being who fully understood it, had left him possessing the legacy of knowledge; and he had but to hold fast by it, prove to the Government that he alone held the original drawings, and claim and receive all future rewards.

Brant knew nothing. He might have heard some rumours of an invention on the way; so had Hamber some idea. But it was a private matter between him and Dalton, and he alone possessed the secret of the construction. Who could hinder him from inheriting everything it produced; and instead of being terribly checked, if not quite ruined by Brant's blow, he now stood there wealthy beyond his wildest hopes, ready to receive royalties that might be without limit, and for what? The work of his own brain.

Wynyan carefully folded and smoothed the plans, gazing at the neat little packet with the light of triumph in his eyes; and a peculiar smile came upon his lips as he stood in imagination once more before Brant Dalton, listening to his words culminating in his curt, insolent dismissal.

'He has thrown me over when I would have worked honestly with him, perfectly content with my share. Dalton would not have let him have a penny if he could have lived and seen how he behaved; it was from his failing hands I took the drawings—our drawings then—mine now; and there is nothing to hinder me—no writing—no agreement upon which to base a claim. No documentary evidence save Dalton's agreement with the Government for others to base their right to share. Let him dispute it if ever he knows. I can prove to the Government that it is my invention, and without these drawings it is useless, for the plans the Government hold have still the fatal blemish. They are useless unless I amend them and make them like to these.'

He uttered a low harsh laugh, and hurriedly buttoned the papers in his breast once more.

'Strange!' he went on, 'that I should not have found the matter out before. No: not strange. I have had so much to think of, and I have never wanted my pocket-book till I was going to give Kilpatrick a card. It is all fate—fate, and he is justly punished for his cowardly treatment. The plans are mine—mine—the children of my brain. Who will dare to claim them now?'

For a time he repented that he had not made sure of having them in his possession when his hand touched something at the doctor's. He felt that Kilpatrick would have rejoiced with him, and told him to hold on to that which had accidentally come into his possession,

but he came back to his old way of thinking—that he had something there which was for himself alone—something to examine and think over with no one near.

The feeling of triumph over his enemy mastered every other thought, and there were moments when he longed to contrive that in some way Brant should learn of the way in which he had fought against himself; but this was soon dismissed.

‘Let him see it in my prosperity,’ he said to himself. ‘The knowledge will come in good time. I could not have a more complete revenge, even if I wished.’

Then he sat and thought of the long weary days and nights he had spent over that invention, and how during the past day or so his loss had not fully come home to him. Now he knew that it would have been heart-breaking, and how bitterly he would have felt the injury when Brant had gone on triumphing—rising as it were to success over the man whom he had trampled down.

‘It would have been maddening,’ he said to himself. ‘I could not have borne it.’ He would have been master in every way, while now there was nothing to prevent—some time in the future when her grief was becoming less poignant—his approaching *Rénée*, telling her of his love, of how her father had intended to make him partner as well as friend, and asking her to be his wife.

He started from his chair with the great drops standing upon his brow, and a look of horror in his eyes, for, as if a stern voice had spoken the words in his ear, conscience whispered: ‘When you have prospered by your dishonour! Are those plans really yours?’

For hours that night, with brain excited almost to madness, he fought that thought with shift, evasion, and excuse—the evil of his nature contending with the better part. The temptation was horrible. They were his. It could not be robbing Dalton’s heirs. How could he rob *Rénée*, when he was ready to work for her, to be her slave in his desire to make her happy, her life one long dream of peace and joy? He would only be taking his own—keeping his own, which had almost been placed in his hands by her father to hold in trust for her. Theft? embezzlement? The idea was absurd, and he told himself that he would be the veriest idiot to cast from him his rights, and place them in his enemy’s hand, for Brant to make a mock of him for his weak, sensitive ideas of honour.

Over and over again he fought the battle, till the dawn found him feverish and utterly exhausted as he lay back in his chair gazing outward through the window to where the soft orange flecks proclaimed the coming of another day’s sun.

The fight was over, and he lay back there worn out with the struggle, but ready to cry aloud:

‘Thank God! I have won. For your sake, dearest. I could not have looked you in the eyes again.’

The next minute, he was tying up the plans, and sealing the knot, before carefully securing them in a large envelope, which he also sealed

and then buttoned up tightly in his breast, after which he sank back with the fever passing away, to leave him sleeping peacefully as a child.

LONDON’S WATER-SUPPLY.

It is hardly necessary to insist on the difficulty of supplying to the enormous population of London an adequate service of pure water. The duty is one which the County Council, in emulation of the smaller but more advanced corporations in England and Scotland, is anxious to bear on its own shoulders. But at present it devolves upon eight companies, all of which have a curious and varied history. If we glance at the small beginnings of this phase of municipal work, we will be the better able to appreciate the astonishing dimensions of the present system of supply. Once, of course, there was no organised supply. A few wells in convenient places, aided by the brooks which ran into the Thames, and have long since been filled up, gave the early citizens all the water they required. By-and-by it became necessary to bring water from the Tybourne near Hampstead, in conduits, and it is said that the points at which these conduits discharged their burdens into little reservoirs are still indicated in street names, Lamb’s Conduit Street being an instance. Then in 1557 a Dutchman named Morrys received permission to build a water-wheel in one of the arches of the old London Bridge, and there for a great many years the water of the Thames, purer then than now, was raised for the city.

Not till half a century after was the first step taken towards a water-service on the present lines. To Sir Hugh Myddelton, a goldsmith in the city of London, the honour of the new service is due. James I. of England gave the Lord Mayor of London permission to tap the springs of Hertfordshire for his city’s service; but the Corporation showed no zeal in the matter, and Sir Hugh, as a volunteer or ‘adventurer,’ laid the foundation of the New River Company, which exists to this day, and an ‘adventurer’s’ share in which is a rich prize indeed. Some years were spent in making the aqueduct or ‘new river’ to bring the waters of the Chadwell and Amwell springs to Islington; but in 1613 the water was permitted to enter the reservoirs in London, and some curious prints still commemorate the scene of festivity which attended the remarkable event. The river then was thirty-eight miles long; but it has since been shortened to twenty-eight, and the company has opened out many new sources of supply, both in chalk wells, and by taking water from the river Lea.

This was the first of the great water companies of London. Not till the next century did the Chelsea Company appear. Both these systems supplied water through wooden pipes, chiefly of elm; and in districts where pipes were not laid, the water was sold from barrels driven about on wheels. The Chelsea Company took its water from ponds in St James’s Park for many years; and when the demand increased, it transferred its attentions to the

Thames. Filtration there was none; and not till 1829 was science so far advanced that the water was set to stand for a few hours to allow the dirt in it to subside. The Grand Junction Company was, however, in its original source of supply even less particular; for it actually drew its water from the Grand Junction Canal. If that eminently useful waterway was in anything like its present state then, the taste of the people in the company's district must have been very accommodating. The Grand Junction was set down in Paddington, and when it was driven by circumstances to abandon the canal, it went to Chelsea, and took the water of the river instead. This represented an improvement in quality, no doubt, for the Thames then was a tolerably pure stream; but its purity was the victim of a gradual decadence, which in time dislocated the arrangements of all the companies on its banks. The near neighbour of the Grand Junction and the Chelsea Companies is the West Middlesex, which was a very small affair at first. These three undertakings now supply the most fashionable quarters of London, all the large clubs and hotels, and the great houses.

The south side of the river has three companies for its supply, but one of them does not trouble the Thames at all. The Lambeth Company has always tapped the Thames. With a twenty horse-power engine it used to draw the water from a point near the present Charing Cross Railway Bridge, and pump it straight into the cisterns of the customers. By-and-by it substituted cast-iron pipes for wooden ones, through which the water used to leak; and gradually its area and its supply grew till it became a vast undertaking. The Southwark and Vauxhall Company, its immediate neighbour, did not at first aspire to the Thames. True, it is a descendant of old Morrys's Water-wheel system at London Bridge, but the first actual source of the supply was a brook which used to run through Brixton to the Thames. It was called Vauxhall Creek, and became so fetid by-and-by that the company was compelled to go to the greater river, and made a tunnel three feet six inches in diameter to take the water from the Thames. The Kent Company, however, depends entirely on wells. The discovery of this supply was a mere accident, for the company, which serves the greater part of South-east London, used to draw the Raven's Burn water; and it was only because the well-water rushed into the foundations of a new engine-house that the existence of a vast store of pure water in the chalk formation, ready for immediate distribution, was suspected. Ever since then, the residents in this district have enjoyed a cold, clear well-water, drawn from a depth of two hundred feet, and so pure that any attempt to filter it would be superfluous. Its temperature hardly ever varies; and the supply is so inexhaustible that no system of storage reservoirs is necessary.

Lastly, we come to the East London Company, which has the most onerous duty and the greatest demand to meet of all the eight organisations. It has three sources of supply—the Thames, the Lea, and the chalk springs;

the Thames being the least important. For two hundred years the companies which are now merged in the East London served the east end; and the enormous extension of that part of the metropolis has made the company the most important, though not the most wealthy of the eight. It has enormous storing capacity now, its reservoirs at Walthamstow holding eight hundred millions of gallons and covering nearly two hundred and forty acres. Even this vast flood, however, would only be enough to supply the whole of London for about four days. When the cholera epidemics of the middle of the century threw suspicion on the Thames as a source of drinking-water, Parliament compelled all the river companies to remove their intakes above the tidal portion of the stream; and at Hampton, Surbiton, and Molesey there are now the inlets of six companies, and their storing and filtering beds and pumping works are conspicuous features of the riverside scene.

The whole of Greater London, covering an area of about six hundred and thirty miles, is supplied by these organisations, whose powers and districts are defined by law. The six Thames companies are allowed to draw a maximum supply of 120 million gallons a day; the East London is allowed to take 33 million gallons, and the New River 22½ million gallons a day from the Lea; the rest comes from the chalk wells; there is also, however, a supplementary supply drawn by several companies from the gravel beds by the side of the Thames, and in time of flood or drought this natural store is very useful. In March last year, 180 millions of gallons of filtered water were required every day for the supply of London, which gave an average of about thirty-three gallons to each person in the area of supply, for drinking, domestic, and trade purposes. But in March last the consumption had increased so greatly that the daily total was 220 million gallons, or 40 gallons per head. Every drop of the water has been carefully purified, with the exception of that from the wells. For this purpose, the companies have 114 filter beds, covering 117½ acres. Every company, except the Kent, has storage reservoirs, in which water is kept in readiness for emergencies. There are storage reservoirs for unfiltered water, covering 474½ acres, and holding about 1280 millions of gallons, and sixty filtered water reservoirs holding 217 millions of gallons. That is to say, if every source of supply were cut off, London would have enough water in store for a little more than a week. The pumping operations represent an enormous expenditure of force. The Southwark Company, for instance, pumps a dozen million gallons every day a distance of eighteen miles to Nunhead, with a rise of 215 feet, for distribution thence to the other parts of the district. The pipes, too, are often enormous in size, some of the tunnels being nine feet in diameter. As for the length, there are in all London 5000 miles of water-pipes, on which there are some 27,625 hydrants. It is hard to gain from mere figures an adequate conception of the extent of London's water-supply, but the enormous stream of water flows steadily into the houses—over 800,000 of them—day after

day, carefully filtered and purified; and the system contrasts curiously with the old New River water-carts and Chelsea's wooden pipes.

But London grows so rapidly that the minds of experts are filled with anxiety as to the provision which must be made for the future. The Commission which investigated this matter some time ago came to the conclusion that there is no reason for concern, and that no danger of famine is imminent. On the present rate of increase it is estimated that in 1931 London will have a population of eleven millions, requiring 415 million gallons of water a day as a maximum supply. This is at the rate of nearly thirty-eight gallons a head, which is far above the present yearly average; but even with such a supply, the Commission thinks there is, for forty years ahead at least, ample margin in the present sources. By increasing the Thames supply to a maximum of 300 million gallons a day, maintaining the Lea supply at its present figure, and taking 67,500,000 gallons from the chalk wells in Hertfordshire and Kent, a supply of 420 million gallons a day can be had, which at the present rate of consumption would be enough for thirteen millions of people, and at the more liberal rate allowed by the Commissioners enough and to spare for the population which London is then expected to have. Storage reservoirs in the Thames valley, and further tapping of the chalk area east of the Kent Company's district, are among the suggested measures; and as the Commissioners are perfectly satisfied that the river waters, when properly filtered, are quite safe and wholesome, they make out a fair case for adhesion to existing sources. Those who look beyond 1931 may have qualms as to the continual sufficiency of the supply; but the facts we have already considered are astonishing enough, and to go further into the area of thousands of millions would only produce bewilderment. We had better leave the mighty water-supply of London where it is.

THE HOME CIVIL SERVICE.

THE selecting of candidates for vacant posts in all branches of the Civil Service occupies the time of an entire Government department—that of the Civil Service Commission—which costs over forty thousand pounds a year. On an average, thirty thousand candidates are examined yearly, for no one can enter the portals of the service without undergoing some sort of literary test, though it should be merely in reading and writing. Thus the examiners have frequently to devote their time to ascertaining the elementary acquirements of housekeepers, matrons, porters, and messengers who have obtained their appointments by favour, as well as to measuring the particular knowledge possessed by surveyors, geologists, and chemists. Apart from such special work, there remains the examining, at more or less regular intervals, of aspirants for clerkships, Excise and Customs officerships, sorters in the Post-office, and telegraphists.

Posts in the Civil Service are very rightly looked upon by hosts of the rising youth of the country as very desirable situations. The work is, as a rule, easy, the pay is fairly good and regularly increasing, promotion is certain, and old age is provided for by a liberal pension. A person who has served forty years can retire upon two-thirds of his final salary. The rule is: 'Multiply salary on retiring by number of years of service and divide by sixty.' Naturally, however, this rule is not inflexible.

Among the best paid appointments in the Home Service are those of clerkships in the 'New Higher Division.' Competition for these is not very keen—about four candidates for each vacancy—and examinations are held at irregular intervals. The limits of age are twenty-two and twenty-four, and a fee of six pounds is charged for examination, which embraces a very wide range of subjects. Among these may be mentioned the language, literature, and history of England, Greece, Rome, France, Germany, and Italy; pure and mixed mathematics, natural and moral science, jurisprudence, and political economy. Candidates are at liberty to take up any or all of these subjects, and it may be mentioned that the majority of the successful competitors are usually university graduates in honours. Although the examinations are difficult, the prospects are very good. The salary commences at one hundred pounds, and rises by twelve pounds ten shillings annually to four hundred pounds, thence by twenty pounds to a maximum of six hundred pounds; while many superior posts, with salaries ranging from six hundred pounds to one thousand pounds, are filled from this branch.

Coming now to consider those situations which attract the largest number of candidates, we find that competitions for such take place, as a rule, twice annually. These competitions have been held from time to time since 1870, and in some cases before that year; but although examinations for any appointment be held at corresponding dates in successive years, the Commissioners ask that it be not assumed that they will continue to be so held in the future, as they only take place when it becomes necessary to provide for vacancies. However, a pretty accurate estimate of probable dates may be made by watching the appointments as they occur, and thus arriving at the number who still remain to be appointed from the successful lists of previous examinations. The competitions are held 'with reference to the vacancies existing at the time, or to the number which may be estimated to occur within any period not exceeding six months' from their announcement. The notices of the dates and number of vacancies to be filled are made in some of the principal London and provincial newspapers, those in the London dailies usually appearing on Thursdays.

Regarding books for study, or the course of

preparation candidates should follow, the Commissioners give no information apart from what may be gathered from the examination papers and table of marks published on the result of each competition.

Female employments may be divided into three distinct branches—those of sorters in the post-office, and of telegraphists and clerkships. The subjects of examination and limits of age for sorters and telegraphists are similar. Candidates must not be less than fifteen years of age, nor more than eighteen, and must be unmarried or widows! A note to the regulations states that they will be required to resign their appointments on marriage. The subjects of examination are: Handwriting, orthography, English composition (to be tested by a short essay or letter on a simple subject), arithmetic (including vulgar and decimal fractions and percentages), and general geography. It may be said that competition is very keen; an average of eighty-five over the entire examination being quite a usual percentage for a successful candidate to make. There are anywhere from ten to thirty candidates forward for each vacancy advertised. Successful students who are to be telegraphists require to undergo a course of instruction in telegraphy, for which no charge is made; but they receive no pay while under instruction. The course extends usually over a period of three months, and when they pass successfully through the school, they receive ten shillings a week for the first year, twelve shillings during the second, and fifteen shillings for the third. Their salary thence rises by one shilling and sixpence annually to twenty-eight shillings a week, and further promotion depends on merit. The salary of sorters commences at twelve shillings a week, and rises one shilling annually to twenty-one shillings and sixpence. Candidates for this situation must not be under four feet ten inches in height.

The tests set to female clerks are much more formidable; and indeed a long course of careful preparation is necessary before any one can hope to be successful. The subjects are the same as for sorters, only they are much more advanced in nature, and include history. The arithmetic papers set are fairly difficult, and the geography and history questions asked are very searching. Above all—and this is the weak point with most—an essay 'of not less than two foolscap pages' has to be written on one of three given subjects, 'with special attention to grammatical accuracy.' The limits of age are eighteen and twenty, and the commencing salary is sixty-five pounds. This increases by three pounds per annum to one hundred pounds, with good prospects of promotion to higher grades. They are required to attend seven hours daily, and are employed either in the Receiver and Accountant-general's office, or in the savings-bank department of the General Post-office.

The examinations for sorters and telegraphists are held mostly in London, very rarely also in Edinburgh and Dublin. Those for female clerks are regularly held at ten centres.

The limits of age for male sorters are eighteen and twenty-one; for male telegraphists, fourteen and eighteen. The examination for the latter

is exactly similar to that for female telegraphists; that for sorters differs only in respect to the paper set in arithmetic, which includes only the first four rules, simple and compound. The examination fee for all sorters' and telegraphists' examinations is two shillings and sixpence. The wages of male sorters begins at eighteen shillings a week, and rises annually one shilling to twenty shillings, thence by annual increments of two shillings a week to forty shillings. The hours of attendance are eight daily, and are generally divided into two periods of duty, one in the very early hours of the morning, and the other in the evening.

Male telegraphists, after passing through the school of telegraphy, receive twelve shillings a week for the first year, fourteen shillings for the second, and eighteen shillings for the third. Thence their weekly salary increases by two shillings a week annually to forty shillings. These, as well as the female staff, must hold themselves ready for Sunday duty. All sorters and telegraphists have to serve two years on probation.

The competitions for boy and men clerkships are, as a rule, very well attended. Boy clerks must not be less than fifteen years of age, nor more than seventeen; the limits for men clerks, or, as this branch of the service is officially known, the Second Division, are seventeen and twenty. It may be mentioned here that the age limit is reckoned up to the 'first day of the examination,' so that a candidate turned seventeen on, say, the 3d of June could sit an examination beginning on the 4th, while another may present himself whose twentieth birthday might fall on the 5th, even supposing the examination to last till the 8th. The examination tests include in the case of boy clerks an exercise in copying MS. (to test accuracy); that for Second Division also includes the above, with the addition of indexing or docketing official letters, digesting returns into summaries, English history, and book-keeping. Boy candidates require to pay a fee of ten shillings, men clerks a fee of two pounds.

The Second Division examination is really the stiffest that is held in the lower branches of the service. Although many of the tests given are purely a question of mechanical accuracy, the papers set in history, geography, arithmetic, composition, and book-keeping are in reality very searching.

Boy-clerk candidates are examined at seven centres, those for Second Division at fourteen. Very few of the former get work out of London. There are a very limited number in Edinburgh and a few in Dublin, but vacancies in either of these places are extremely rare. On the other hand, men clerks are required to serve 'in any department of the State (at home or abroad) to which they may be called.'

At each open competition for men clerkships, one-fourth the number of vacancies is reserved for boy clerks, who compete among themselves for the places. Those entering the service as 'boys' remain boys until they attain the age of twenty, when they are struck off the list unless they have been successful in obtaining a Second Division clerkship in either the limited or open competition.

The pay of boy clerks begins at fourteen shillings a week, and rises one shilling weekly per annum as long as they are in the service. Men clerks receive a commencing salary of seventy pounds per annum, which rises five pounds yearly to one hundred pounds, thence by seven pounds ten shillings to one hundred and ninety pounds, and then by ten pounds to three hundred and fifty pounds. The prospects of promotion are very good.

One of the most popular branches of the service is the Excise. Candidates for this appointment are required to pass an examination in handwriting, English composition and orthography, geography, and higher arithmetic, including mensuration. The limits of age are nineteen and twenty-two, and candidates must be unmarried. Evidently the Civil Service Commissioners are determined not to allow into the service persons already burdened with the cares of housekeeping. This is especially wise in view of the small initial salary paid in most cases. Assistants of Excise receive fifty pounds per annum, which rises five pounds yearly to eighty pounds, thence by various increments to four hundred pounds. Second-class officers receive two shillings per diem when actively employed, so that the initial salary in most cases is over eighty pounds. The examination fee is one pound, and there are in all twenty centres where competitions are held.

The regulations for Customs candidates, after going through many changes from time to time, may now be regarded as practically settled. The limits of age are eighteen and twenty-one, and the subjects of examination are similar to those for the Excise service. The examination fee is fifteen shillings, and competitions are held at eighteen centres. The salary commences at fifty-five pounds per annum, and rises by annual increments of three pounds to eighty pounds, thence from eighty-five pounds by similar increments to one hundred pounds. Prospects of promotion are very good, officers of the first class of approved character being eligible for the second class of examining officers, subject to a test examination in practical departmental business.

In regard to the age limit for all examinations, there are many exceptions, which need not be given in full. It may be stated that persons in the Civil Service can only attend any other examination conducted by the Commissioners on producing the written permission of the authorities of their department. Those who have been not less than two years in the Civil Service may deduct from their actual age any time, not exceeding five years, which they may have spent in such service.

It is not the practice of the Commissioners to test beforehand the question of physical qualifications. This is done after the candidate has been successful in the literary part of the examination. Except for Customs, a slight degree of ordinary short-sight is not a disqualification. Permanent deafness, loss of an arm, leg, or hand, and considerable lameness, are disqualifications. Delicacy of constitution, though positive disease is absent, may lead to rejection, and, especially for the post-office, want of general vigour may disqualify. In regard to

holidays, the annual leave of absence varies from three to six weeks according to the department, and, of course, according also to the status of the servant.

THE BOMBARDIER.

CHAPTER III.

DESPITE Sergeant Quackenbush's good intentions, Bombardier Shewell's enmity increased. The opinion of the village was divided. There was a shrillness to the vanity of the soldier of artillery, which, vexing those about him, would have touched them a little too, if they could have seen how sore was the heart behind it. The curate, hoping that the association would bring about peace, influenced members of the congregation to elect the sergeant as the Bombardier's fellow-sidesman at the annual vestry meeting. After events did not fulfil the curate's hopes. When it chanced, of a Sunday, that the churchwardens were not present, the sidesmen collected the offertory, and the two soldiers then performed the duty. The curate found the occasions a combination of chastened humour and uneasiness. At the words 'Let your light so shine before men,' &c., the two soldiers, rising abruptly from their front seats, and, looking askance at each other, would begin their task, working towards the farther end of the church. He who finished first waited for the other: if the sergeant, with soldierly exactness of position, and face good-humouredly set in the sacred line of duty; if the Bombardier, with elevated head, lips protruding, and a fine disregard of the sergeant's labours. When the task of both was ended, and they were ready to march to the chancel, they stepped forward, looking over each other's heads the while. Then, at proper distance, they paused, made a right and left turn respectively, fell into line, shoulder to shoulder, and marched erect and grim to the altar rails. The offertory being delivered, they paused again, and the former evolutions were repeated as they returned to their seats, never having directly looked at each other. Even Sophie Warner felt a thrill of fear at times lest the Bombardier should suddenly revolt. If the two chanced to meet in the vestry, and it was necessary to speak, they did so, looking at the buttons on each other's coats only: if they met in the street, they saluted stiffly, without looking at all.

One day there appeared a notice in the county paper, to the effect that Sergeant Quackenbush had been made a Justice of the Peace. For years this honour had been Bombardier Shewell's ambition. 'And now,' as he said with sharp-set anger—'now to be forestalled by a beggarly sergeant of the Line, by a hero of Gatling guns and feather-stuffed palliasses!'

It was the sergeant's offending developed to the nth degree; it was giving the children's bread to the dogs. One or two good citizens tried to show him that his financial qualifications were not sufficient—the sergeant had bought real estate along the line of the Silver Valley Railway—that he was old, and that, in any case, the respect in which the people held

him could not be increased by any such honour. They forebore to tell that his irascible and self-satisfied spirit, his conspicuous prejudices and heroidal ideas of justice, were hardly adapted to the magisterial bench; that he would be too much inclined to administer law after the rigid procedure of a court-martial. It was in vain: the injury was done; and the nitric breath of the Bombardier's indignation was only being held for a chance to blow the sergeant from his perch.

It was apparent to the village, as to Sophie Warner and Keble Graves, that a climax must come soon. Something must break—either the Bombardier's high temper, or the sticks of the two soldiers on each other's heads. One day there appeared in the county paper the following letter:

'A SHOT IN THE OPEN.

'To the Editor of the *Clarion*.

'SIR—I desire to say, that in my opinion—an opinion matured by seventy-five years' knowledge of the world, and study of political and historical conditions in many countries—the present Government has abandoned its forts and hauled down its flag. To fill public offices with fit and proper men is the proud right of a Government; but, sir, the late appointments to Commissions of the Peace—and one in particular!—prove the present Ministry unworthy of confidence. I worked for the election of the member for this district, but now, sir, I draw the caustic pencil across the countenance of political iniquity. Strangers are set to rule over us. I demand to know, without ambush or subterfuge, whether henceforth the sentinels of the Law are to be ignorant and boastful, and if our magisterial bench is to be the refuge of the irresponsible new-comer, and, it may be—I do not assert it—it may be, the adventurer! But let faithless Governments and their satellites beware! The wicked shall be put to flight, and the righteous shall dwell in their tents.—I have the honour to be, sir, obediently yours,

MATTHEW SHEWELL, Bombardier.'

This letter produced a sensation; faction feeling ran high. It divided political parties. It split the Methodist body; it drew the attention of the red-shirted river-men, who were running a late drive of logs down the Cascarada; it roused the sergeant to antipathy—he had hitherto only been on the sturdy defensive. Sectarianism, temperance, politics, personal and moral exasperation were all at work. The following week this reply to the Bombardier appeared:

'LITTLE RAPIDS, June 24, 1888.

'To the Editor of the *Clarion*.

'SIR—Matthew Shewell (Bombardier), the same, as he has informed us, having been "with Raglan at the Alma," has come out with a blustering muzzle-loader to dismount a battery of Armstrong guns. Sir, I have the honour to be one of the late appointments to the Commission of the Peace. If not to know *patois* French is ignorant, I am ignorant; if to carry a medal "for gallant service on the field of battle" is boastful, I am boastful, the like being

mine—and there you are! I am a new-comer to this district, but as to being an adventurer, my record gives that taunt the lie. Were I not bound by my position, and my assailant not an old man—but I will not proceed. The public will understand me; and while I blush for a fellow-citizen, a fellow-churchman, and a fellow-soldier, I have the honour to subscribe myself, sir, respectfully yours,

BRIGG QUACKENBUSH, J.P., Sergeant.'

The day following the appearance of this letter, Sergeant Quackenbush, J.P., tried his first case. Information had been laid against an ancient quack of the neighbourhood, for practising medicine without a license, and the matter was to be heard in the large sitting-room of Tinsley's Tavern. The sergeant, with good taste and wisdom, had asked to sit with him on the bench another J.P. of the neighbourhood—Mr Meadows, a well-to-do farmer. The sergeant knew that the Bombardier had espoused the cause of old Zach Brydon, and intended to defend him at the trial. Prompt to the time the placid and bald Meadows, J.P., sat down beside the grizzled and unemotional sergeant, and prompt to the time also came the Bombardier with his limping, hump-shouldered client. The Bombardier carried under his arm a volume of the Consolidated Statutes, and a copy of *Every Man his Own Lawyer*.

Information had been laid by a man, who was evidently in the employ of a Medical Association, though both the local physicians denied having encouraged the prosecution, and both, in the witness-box, tried to avoid incriminating the old man. Yet they testified that they had attended cases which old Zach Brydon had prayed over, and coaxed with herbs of harmless violence, cases mostly of chronic rheumatism, dyspepsia, dropsy, tumour, and the like. Then came people who had given themselves up to the prayers, and the unlicensed dispensing of slippery-elm bark and boneset. Their evidence, in spite of the Bombardier's stern cross-examination, strengthened the case for the prosecution. The clinching point was the question of payment to Zach Brydon for medical attendance. The Bombardier's attempt to upset this was maladroit. It was done as one would open a door with a crowbar. As point after point told against his client; as witnesses remained either obdurately malicious in their tales of wasted prayers and herb decoctions, for which hard-earned cash or notes-of-hand had been given in exchange; as others stated regretfully that they had always known and called the man Doctor Brydon or Doctor Zach; and as the informant became sneeringly triumphant and the crowd amused, the Bombardier's irritation grew.

Once or twice he had ventured to question the regularity of certain items of procedure, by reference to the fact that 'When I appeared before his Honour, Judge Monmouth,' or 'When I argued my own case at Sherbrooke against Sir Henry Smiles,' &c.; but the sergeant was rigid, and Mr Meadows was firm in a youthful kind of way.

When the moment came for the Bombardier's defence, he was filled with wrath, his demeanour

was threatening. He rose, looked round through his huge eyeglass, and then said: 'Your worships, I have no hesitation in defending this much-injured man. He is the victim of busy mockers, who gnash upon him with their teeth, who lay nets for him privily, who compass him about. And why, your worships? Verily, to reap the rewards of the base informer. In some countries, your worships, and not without reason, these marauders are given bullets instead of fines. This man, pointing to the informer—'this cowardly spy, instead of earning an honest living, invades this peaceful hamlet, and begins a scheme of vile pillage whereby to batten upon the earnings of'—

Here the sergeant interrupted. 'We inform you, Bombardier Shewell,' he said, 'that such language must not be used in court. You have to do with the evidence, not the character of the person laying the information.'

"Person," your worship: you say well—"person" is the word. He is a person who would rob!—

'Eh! eh! eh!' quickly interposed Mr Meadows, with a motherly finger-shake.

But the Bombardier with ample scorn continued: 'I repeat, and again I repeat it, your worships—rob the poor of their benefactor, the humble of their friend, the man who, to bless suffering humanity'—

'Gives them horse-medicine, and takes their notes at ten per cent. interest!—Look in the lining of his coat, if you want to see the notes!' interjected the informer.

'You must not interrupt, sir,' said Mr Meadows. 'It—it is not gentlemanly—it—it is not permitted. I shall be quite angry if it is repeated.'

'Gentlemanly!' again continued the Bombardier; 'we were speaking of him as a *person*, not as a gentleman, your worships!'

The speech went on—a series of interruptions and calls to order. The Bombardier questioned the ability of the magistrates to know the statutes; he none too vaguely referred to beggars on horseback; he dwelt suggestively on the dignity due to the proper administration of the statutes; he appealed to the spirit of Justice; and received for the last sentiment approving nods from Mr Meadows. He closed with a warlike philippic against the informer, and finally said: 'I am firm in the belief that your worships cannot fail to give a verdict for the defendant, unless, peradventure, this court should not be a mount of the law, but a valley of the dry bones of injustice.'

Their worships, however, without a moment's hesitation, gave judgment against the defendant, with fine and costs.

The Bombardier sprang to his feet. 'We appeal to a higher court, your worships!' he said. 'We appeal from ignorance of the law, from magisterial stupidity and injustice, to the Court of Quarter Sessions.'

Upon the sensation which this provoked, there fell the cold words of the sergeant: 'It is necessary to inform Bombardier Shewell that there is in this country no such tribunal as the Court of Quarter Sessions—and there you are!'

With impotent fierceness, the Bombardier

cried: 'It's a lie! It's a lie!' and sharply bringing his knuckles down on the table before him, he repeated: 'We appeal to the Court of Quarter Sessions!'

Mr Meadows was surprised and shocked. He turned to the sergeant, and whispered in his ear; then he said: 'Bombardier Shewell, if it was magisterial, we should be angry with you. But we—we fine you ten dollars for contempt of court.'

A sudden change came into the demeanour of the Bombardier. Breathing fast, and staring hard at the magistrates on the bench, he stood for a moment silent; and a cold sweat broke out on his forehead. Mechanically he found his hat. His client spoke to him, but he did not hear. His lips moved, as if he were speaking to himself. He did not take up the *Every Man his Own Lawyer*: it had played him false.

He turned to go, the crowd making way for him. All their amusement, all the vulgar irony and faction feeling for or against the old soldier, were absorbed in painful curiosity. Even the river-drivers took hitches in their red sashes, and shook their heads doubtfully. As the Bombardier advanced with bowed head, some one barred his way. He looked up. It was a constable.

Then the voice of Mr Meadows was again heard: 'Bombardier Shewell will please to pay his fine before he leaves the court-room.'

Sergeant Quackenbush's face was troubled, and he drew something from his pocket, but Mr Meadows whispered in his ear, and he put hesitatingly the hand back into his pocket. The soldier in him was struggling with the magistrate. The Army was being humbled: gray-headed military service was being brought low before civilians—a hero of the Alma was being fined like a common roysterer.

The Bombardier drew in a deep breath, and, turning, faced the Bench.

'You fine me! You dare to fine me, sir!' he said to Sergeant Quackenbush.

The blandness of Mr Meadows was now puffed up to a fine exaggeration of offended dignity. 'Bombardier, we fine you ten dollars for contempt of court. The Bench must not be insulted. The Bench, sir, must be protected. The Bench, we must inform you, Bombardier Shewell—not ourselves, not ourselves, but the Bench—cannot be set at defiance—not with impunity, Bombardier Shewell.'

The curate came forward and said to the humiliated soldier: 'Bombardier, let me settle this for you;' and he laid the ten dollars on the magisterial table.

The old soldier's cup was full. He had no money with him, and little to spare elsewhere. To be fined was a slash in the face; not to have the money to pay the fine on the spot was the last thrust home. Without a word to the curate, he blindly turned and walked through the lane made for him, out of the door, and into the street. All useless rage was gone now, and in its stead was a ponderous disgrace. In vain he drew himself up as he passed the garrulous loungers on the veranda without. His shoulders would not remain squared. His thin gray hair was caught by

the slight breeze from the river, and blown about his temples, and, as he moved slowly down the steps and upon the outer side-walk, Ira Tinsley turned to the loafers beside him and said: 'Boys, it's put twenty years on his shoulders.'

When some one replied: 'It's took down his pride, I guess!' Tinsley continued: 'Say, you wouldn't snicker like that if Anthony was alive, and heard you!'

The rest of the crowd nodded approval, and watched the Bombardier. Never before had he been seen to pass a piece of wood, or a stone in his path, without flicking it aside grandly with his stick. But now he trod on a boy's hoop, and it flew up and struck him on the shin. He did not heed it. He stepped on the end of a loose board in the side-walk, and he stumbled violently, but he took no heed. Some idle boys laughed, but he made no sign. He was only more stooped as he passed on towards the bridge. The curate reached him as he entered the covered bridge, and put a hand gently on his shoulder. 'I'll walk home with you, Bombardier,' he said.

'I want to be alone,' was the husky reply. 'I'll pay you the ten dollars. I *can* pay it, you understand!' he said, shaking his stick impotently. But it was only a feeble flash of the old Adam. He relapsed again instantly into gloom. The curate saw Sophie Warner approaching, and he sighed with relief. Yet there was something else besides relief in his sigh. His eyes met hers with a mute request in them. She understood, and took the old man's arm. He resented it, but presently walked on with her.

Her pretty confidences could not draw the Bombardier from his gloom; the arrow had gone too deep. We have all different conceptions of what would shame us most: the Bombardier had found his.

He did not hear her words. He turned to her at last, his stick quivering in his hands, and said: 'He fined me—fined me for contempt of court! We appealed to a higher court, to the Court of Quarter Sessions, and he wouldn't recognise it. Do you hear? He wouldn't recognise it; and it's in the Statutes—here in the Statutes.' He nervously fumbled the leaves of the book.

'Yes, yes, dear,' she said; 'but don't mind it. You will laugh at it in a day or two.'

'Laugh! laugh!' he cried. 'Ay, ay, I'll laugh. Do they think they can bullyrag an old soldier? Do they think they can bring a man that was with Raglan at the Alma to his?'

But the last word was lost in a dry gasp.

When at last within the little room where he had passed so many years, she sought to divert him, she found it was no use. She busied herself in little household offices, sang verses of songs that she knew he liked, told him bits of gossip of the country-side, and at last began to read him his favourite play, *Henry V.* But none of the valorous brag of the old speeches would rouse him; the humour of Pistol and Bardolph and Fluellen, generally so potent, fell on dull ears. At last she bade him good-bye. At the door she looked back.

He was sitting with his right hand clenched on the table, his eyes bent on an impalpable something before him.

'Good-bye,' she said, smiling; 'I'm coming to play chequers with you to-night. I'll bring Walcho. Walcho is such a good dog now, Bombardier, he remembers all you taught him, and carries his musket beautifully.'

He looked at her abstractedly, and nodded, but that was all. She remembered a phrase with which they usually began their games. She said now, with naive heroics in her tone: 'Remember, Bombardier: *à l'outrance!*'

'*À la mort!*' he answered mechanically, according to their formula. She turned away, and presently was swallowed up in the sunshine.

When she had gone, he sprang to his feet, the red fire of war in his eyes, and, turning to the wall where his accoutrements hung, he cried with threatening eagerness: 'Yes! *To the Death!*'

HOLIDAYS IN BURMA.

SOLDIERING in Burma is not all dacoit-hunting; there are times of peace and happiness as well, when one can enjoy a holiday in many a novel way and see sights of the strangest description. The natives, or, at any rate, those who have been born and bred under British rule, are a sporting, happy-go-lucky lot, and are, moreover, easily moved to mirth. If you meet a Burman on the road and make a face at him, he will squat down and roar with laughter; but if you were to adopt the same tactics with the mild Hindu, he would immediately imagine that he had encountered the Evil One, and either flee for dear life, or grovel on the ground at your feet. I do not wish the reader to imagine that it is my habitual custom to make faces at natives; but there are times when exuberance of spirits leads one to perform acts which the high, 'man-and-brother,' Indian official would consider most unseemly.

Thayetmyo (the Mango-town) stands on the right bank of the river Irawadi, about midway between Rangoon and Mandalay, and is a good sample of a Burman up-country town. It has many points in its favour compared with more civilised Rangoon: the inhabitants are more primitive and pleasanter to deal with in every way. In the main street are always to be seen groups of emaciated Chinamen, who represent the moneyed class of the population, though by what means their wealth is accumulated is only known to the police. Their days are apparently spent in long lounge-chairs, in the enjoyment of their quaint little opium pipes; night-time possibly sees their houses transformed into gambling and opium dens of the worst description, for Burmans of all classes and of all ages are inveterate gamblers, and are, moreover, fast acquiring the habit of indulging in the pernicious drug. In the side streets a happier phase of life is seen, and at all times

of the day, groups of men are busy with one kind of amusement or another. The Burman is an extraordinary individual; he will work like a horse for three or four days, and then for a week will enjoy himself with the money which he has earned. Football is their chief athletic amusement, and is played by them as much to keep their limbs supple as for any other reason. The game is peculiar, and partakes more of battledore and shuttlecock than our game of football. The ball is six inches or less in diameter, and is composed of a network of split canes, neatly interwoven. The number of players is unlimited; sometimes a dozen men may be seen standing round in a circle; at others there may be only a couple of players, the object being always the same—to set the ball going in the air and to prevent its touching the ground again. The players wear as little clothing as possible, the *passoh* being tightly bound round the loins, and on the ball being kicked up, every one does his best to keep it going. The attitudes of the players are wonderful to look at, the ball being caught on heel, knee, or back, and sent flying in all directions. Hands, arms, and even toes, are forbidden to be used in the game, yet the dexterity with which the ball is kept up defies all description. Graceful strokes are much studied, and the swagger assumed by a Burman, poised on one foot ready to receive the ball on the other heel, is almost ludicrous to watch.

This is the only outdoor game in which the Burmans indulge, and it seems curious that, being so closely allied to people whose sole amusement is polo, and being, moreover, devoted to ponies themselves, they should not display any keenness for that best of all games.

'Moung Hpo wanting speak with master,' said my Madras 'boy' one evening.

'All right,' I answered. 'Send him here.'

Moung Hpo is a Burman who speaks pidgin-English, and gets a living chiefly by doing odd jobs for Englishmen, such as pony-buying and curio-hunting. Many a walk in the bazaar have I had with the dirty old ruffian, and a most entertaining companion I have always found him.

'Well, Moung Hpo, what is it?' I asked, as the wizened brown face appeared at the door.

'*Takén*, to-morrow they make 'em burn plenty big *phoonghye* man; if master like, I take 'em see,' was my worthy henchman's reply.

On inquiry I found that the event was a *phoonghye byan*, or cremation of a high-priest—one of the most important religious ceremonies of the Burmans, and one which I had hitherto not had an opportunity of witnessing. The morrow was Thursday—the soldiers' holiday; so I arranged an hour when Moung Hpo should come and take me to the spot chosen for the burning of the great Moung Shway Loogalay.

This particular Thursday was a busy one; we had before us quite an unprecedented list of engagements, and ere the moon rose that night, had enjoyed an immense variety of entertainment. At sunrise we were in the saddle, our stout little twelve-hand ponies delighting in the morning canter. Across the racecourse we go, and picking up half-a-dozen kindred spirits *en route*, enter a deep, sandy nullah, the bed of which has just received

sufficient moisture to make it good going. This morning we had arranged a *chota hazri* picnic at the head of the nullah, and had bidden the few English ladies of the station to the feast, after which the return journey was made by a circuitous route through the bamboo and teak forests.

Riding along in single file, we presently reach a small clearing in the forest, where, on a slight eminence, stands a *phoonghye kyoung*, or priests' residence, whose dried-up-looking inhabitants we find engaged in their matutinal devotions. To-day the devotions are longer than usual, for special prayers have to be offered up and special ceremonies gone through prior to setting out to witness the cremation of the body of Moung Shway Loogalay. Little attention is paid to the intrusion of the foreigners, although, on ordinary occasions, the *phoonghyes* would come out to wish the *takéns* good-morning; but now even the little boy-attendants disregard our presence, and we leave the quiet retreat to its prayers.

Soon after the sun had gained a certain amount of power, we returned to the cantonment and dispersed to our various quarters. Outside my bungalow I found a quaint old Burman squatting, with a bundle under his arm. Accosting the venerable gentleman in my best Burmese, I asked him what he wanted, whereupon he unrolled his bundle and, displaying a huge volume of strange and curious designs, said, 'I makee tattoo *bohut accha*.' Now, it had never occurred to me before to be tattooed; but this appeared to be such an excellent opportunity, that I at once engaged the services of the old Burman; and having selected the most hideous and conventional-looking beast in the book of patterns, gave the order for the operation to commence forthwith. First I was told to bare my arm and to lie down on the ground; then the operator produced a razor, and carefully shaved the hair off the place where the mythical monster was to be emblazoned. After this, I was left for a short time, while some paint was being prepared, when the design was depicted on my arm with a fine brush, and I was allowed to sit up during the drying of the paint. The tattooer now unrolled a long length of rag, and from the innermost recesses brought forth his instruments of torture. I began to repent of my folly, and thought that this was hardly the way to enjoy a holiday. My stable-companion however, who was sitting gloating over my misfortune, persuaded me that it would be most disgraceful to show the white-feather before a native, so I clenched my fist and settled down to see the matter through to the bitter end. A metal instrument, some two feet in length, with a heavy brass carving of a bird at the end, was first brought out; into this my torturer carefully fitted a four-pointed pricker too horrible to describe, then, squatting by my side, he seized the part of my forearm nearest to him with his naked feet, and pressing the other part down with his left hand, he adjusted the pricker between his thumb and fore-finger, and dropped the weighted instrument into my flesh. It was a curious sensation, this first stab, and for the moment I imagined that my arm had

become transfixed to the floor, but, as in most things, *ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte*—and, after a while, there was a kind of fascination in waiting for the next prick. If any one wishes to know if the operation really hurts, let him get a friend to set four needles in a row into a piece of cork, and then thrust them into his arm, every now and then, when he least expects them. The first thrust will, I fancy, satisfy him.

The professional tattooer is a rapid worker, and the pricking-machine soon runs over the outline of the figure; but what takes time is the 'filling-in,' which is done with a somewhat broader style. Every part of the figure must be covered with either black or vermillion, and, as you see the brass bird swooping down time after time, you begin to reckon how many more strokes remain before your torture will be at an end. At last the Burman gives forth a deep sigh, and, putting his head on one side, regards his handiwork with evident satisfaction. All is over, and you breathe again in the knowledge that the mark of the beast and of the Burman is upon you, and must remain upon you to the end of all things. This was my first experience of tattooing, and, I regret to say, not my last, for I fell a prey to the wiles of the tattooer whenever he appeared, until I became a walking picture-gallery.

Tattooing in Burma is a national institution, every male being covered with figures from his waist to his knee, so that in the distance he appears to be clothed in beautifully-fitting 'tights.' The operations commence in early boyhood, a few figures being done at a time. Every description of animal, real and imaginary, from an elephant to a mythical form of cat, is portrayed, each being set in a framework of Burman writing. To be untattooed is a disgrace to a Burman youth; and following the custom of the British sailor in having himself stamped with the name of his lady love, it is no uncommon thing to see, on some part of a 'young spark's' body, a number of round Burman characters—the equivalent to Polly or Susan. How and when the custom of tattooing originated among the Burmans is unknown; but whatever the origin, tattooing is never likely to die out, as a Burman girl will have nothing to say to an unadorned man! Two rupees I gave my artist friend for his indelible picture.

Early in the afternoon we made our way to some fields on the outskirts of the town, where the *phoonghye byan* was to take place. The space set apart for the ceremony was surrounded by an immense crowd of people, elbowing one another for the best places from which to witness the great sight. The body of Moungh Shway Loogalay (embalmed and swathed in cerecloth, covered with gold-leaf) had lain in the coffin for six months, the final cremation being deferred until sufficient money had been collected for the necessary ceremonies. I may here remark that the art of embalming is well understood by the Burmans, and honey is much used for the purpose, especially among the *phoonghyes*, who receive a great quantity of it as alms from the poor. The body is filled with honey and kept floating in it, often for weeks at a time. Before the final cremation takes

place, the honey is drawn off and sold to the people, who partake of it freely. Europeans, I need hardly say, are somewhat careful as to whence they obtain their honey in Burma.

To return, however, to the ceremony. In the centre of an open space we found the huge funeral pile erected, in shape like a pagoda, and built, to a height of fifty or sixty feet, out of bamboo matting, beautified with gay-coloured paper and tinsel. Round the pyre stood several smaller erections—the offerings of the neighbouring villages, and connected with the main structure, so that they would burn with it. Soon after our arrival, the funeral car appeared on the ground, drawn by swarms of the people, every one striving to be to the front in conveying the remains of the great man to the pile. At last the tinsel pagoda is reached, and the coffin hoisted into position on to a central platform, forty feet or more above the ground. Now occurred the most curious part of the spectacle. We imagined that some venerable *phoonghye* would set fire to the great store of petroleum and shavings beneath the coffin, and so conclude the ceremony; but, to our astonishment, from all sides of the ground there commenced a regular fusillade of rockets, some quite small, and others of huge dimensions; the object being, as our worthy guide informed us, to gain merit by setting fire to the pyre. The majority of the rockets missed the mark altogether, and went flying away into space, to the imminent danger of the bystanders. For some time this species of target-practice continued, until at last a mighty rocket, fired from a bullock-cart, hit the mark, when immediately the whole structure caught fire. A shout of joy escaped the onlookers, and then silence fell on everything, as the crowd stood watching the beautiful pagoda fast crumbling away. The bamboo supports, as their joints became heated, went off like pistol-shots, and tongues of fire enveloped the coffin platform. The wooden shell which enclosed the sacred remains of the great priest was soon reached, and a thick black smoke rolled up into the heavens. The Burmans held their breath in awe; the *phoonghye* was passing into the highest state imaginable—the world of everlasting forgetfulness. As the planks of the coffin melted away, the whole pagoda fell in with a crash, and in half an hour nothing was left but a smouldering heap of charcoal. This to the general public was the end; and the vast concourse shortly dispersed, all but a small band of devout *phoonghyes*, who remained, grouped round the smoking embers, waiting until they had cooled sufficiently to search for any particles of the deceased man's bones which might have escaped the flames. These they carefully bore away to their monasteries to bury with due reverence. Thus did Moungh Shway Loogalay find Nirvana.

One other holiday scene I have to record—a boat-race—and certainly the most exciting one at which I have ever been present. The day was the Sunday, and as we took our evening stroll towards the native town, we found the river-side densely crowded with holiday-makers, for Thayetmyo, we learned, was about to row a race against Prome, and all the world and his wife were present to witness the event.

Thayetmyo has turned out to a man, and the place is left to the care of the pariah dogs. The reason is obvious: Thayetmyo has staked its last rupee on the result, and as betting on the tape is as yet unknown in the land, the people must be on the spot to see what happens. As we pass along the crowd, we see little groups of gaily-dressed men and women discussing the probabilities of the race with voices raised in excitement, and we marvel at the change in the usually calm-demeanoured Burman. The ever-present cheroot is forgotten, and lies half-smoked behind the ear; the fruit-seller and the dealer in foul-smelling *napee* is disregarded for the boats on the river, and every one strains forward to catch a glimpse of the frail little barques. First comes the Thayetmyo boat—a long light dug-out, only a few inches out of the water, paddled by four-and-twenty of the picked youth of the place, and 'coxed' by a hoary-headed old man, who has probably rowed the course a hundred times or more. Shout after shout goes up as the people see their boat pass, and a solemn silence follows when the *Pride of Prome* comes gently up the stream. Every one is gauging the strength of the enemy, and evidently there is some anxiety for the safety of the home rupees. Defeat means ruin to the northern town, yet, even after the boats have reached the starting-point, there is not a man who would withdraw his bet were he given the chance.

To the Englishman there did not appear to be anything to choose between the two boats; they were built on almost similar lines—regular racing crafts, some sixty feet in length, and so lightly constructed as to appear to bend as the paddlers made them leap through the water. We had taken up our position by the side of a pagoda, thirty feet or so above the river, and were seated on the backs of a couple of quaint tiger-like images which guarded the entrance to the sacred spot. In front of us was a seething mass of humanity, each one more eager than his neighbour to catch a sight of the rival boats as they passed to their stations. The river stretched before us—one vast expanse, two miles or more in width—while the setting sun at our backs lit up the low hills across the water. What a wealth of colour met our eyes! What a chance for the painter's brush! A foreground of silks of every hue, then the dull gray river, with its silvery sun-decked ripples, and then the sombre bamboo-covered hills, with glorious red reflections filling the heavens on all sides.

But this is no time for thinking of scenery, for the boats are already drawn up for the start, and in another second a cry escapes the crowd—the Burmese equivalent to 'They're off.' The river is straight at this point, and the whole race can be seen. Down they come, at a pace that would make the Irawadi Flotilla Company jealous, the two dozen paddles of each boat plunging into the water with one gigantic splash. No one speaks now, for it is obvious that the race is a tough one. The *Pride of Prome* leads by half a length, gradually gaining distance until a streak of daylight is seen between the two boats. Now a long yell of encouragement leaves the shore, and, as if in

answer to the call, the *Golden Flower* shoots forward and leaves its adversary behind. Again, however, before half the course is rowed, the strangers have come to the front, and the faces of the people around us are growing long; the Thayetmyo rupees are in the balance, and it is evidently a toss-up who wins. Half-a-dozen times in as many minutes the boats change places, until within a few lengths of the winning-post, when the *Golden Flower* is seen suddenly to leap through the water, and leaving the strangers a good length behind, flies past the post an easy winner.

The pent-up feelings of the spectators now burst their bonds, and a perfect roar of delight and applause is given forth. The men snatch the flowers from their mass of hair and fling them aloft, and the women and children shriek and dance for joy. Victory has been snatched from the enemy; Thayetmyo has beaten Prome; but better still, Thayetmyo has won the Prome rupees.

A SOLILOQUY.

Not married yet, and twenty-nine!
My 'friends' are almost in despair;
I see their anxious looks incline
Towards my 'fringe,' where ought to shine
The silver of the first gray hair!

They talk no more of 'single bliss';
But note, with eyes cast gravely down,
The joys unwedded women miss—
The husband's smile, the children's kiss
(Of course a husband cannot frown).

The fullest harmonies of life,
They say in sentences that glow,
Are awakened for the happy wife
(There's no such thing as married strife
In this enlightened age, we know).

And when they feel extremely kind,
They picture things that 'might have been';
And think the men are very blind
Who rate the 'graces of the mind'
Below the charms of sweet seventeen!

I say no word of praise or blame:
My life has still its golden days;
And round my well-loved maiden name
Cling many a tender hope and aim
Apart from mankind and their ways.

Has light-winged Cupid fluttered by,
And is there only shadow left?
Not so; the sun is in the sky:
Why should I fold my hands and sigh,
Like one of brightness quite bereft?

But since I am not made of ice,
If Mr Right should come my way,
And whisper something very nice,
I might, perhaps, consider *twice*,
And after all not answer 'Nay!'

E. MATHESON.

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